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Mrs Chris Hodkinson  
Headteacher  
Colebrook Infant Academy  
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Swindon  
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Dear Mrs Hodkinson

### **Short inspection of Colebrook Infant Academy**

Following my visit to the school on 19 September 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in January 2014.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You work effectively with other leaders and governors to ensure that the right priorities are identified to keep improving the school. A notable strength is in how well you and your staff know the pupils and their individual needs. You have established a nurturing school through your shared values and ethos. This is a happy and inclusive school where pupils are cherished, respected and supported to achieve well. Parents and carers overwhelmingly recognise this. Their comments include, 'It is so reassuring... to have full faith in leaving my children every day with kind and supportive staff.'

The quality of education is good. Teachers plan a range of interesting lessons and activities to motivate pupils, including getting outdoors and visits. As a result, pupils feel heavily involved and are enthusiastic partners in their learning. Furthermore, you have focused well to tackle weaknesses, such as in pupils' phonics for reading and writing. Your work is reflected in the strong improvement in pupils' achievement in the Year 1 phonics screening check and Year 2 retakes. Pupils are well prepared for key stage 2 by the time they leave. This is seen in pupils' reading, writing and mathematics outcomes at the end of key stage 1 which are consistently above the national averages, including for the most able pupils.

You and other leaders have successfully tackled the area for development identified at the previous inspection. You have high expectations and successfully hold others to account. However, there are some key challenges remaining for you and other

leaders to address. These include raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils more consistently in reading, writing and mathematics, including the most able disadvantaged pupils. In addition, despite similar proportions of children reaching a good level of development at the end of the early years compared to national benchmarks, the attainment of some girls remains too variable.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You and your leaders are effective in promoting a strong culture for safeguarding pupils. Together with well-informed staff and governors, you ensure that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You have robust systems and processes for checking that staff, volunteers and governors may work safely with children. High-quality training for all staff is current and ensures that all adults know what to do to keep pupils safe. Staff are aware and vigilant. Staff referrals to the designated safeguarding leaders are handled with due diligence and urgency. You are uncompromising in your work with other professional agencies to ensure that the highest level of care, support and intervention for pupils is sought and secured as required.

Pupils say they feel safe. They are aware of actions they must take to avoid danger, including how to evacuate the school quickly and sensibly if needed. You talk to the pupils about e-safety, including during assembly. Pupils have a secure understanding of ways to report suspicious behaviour to a trusted adult. However, a few of the pupils lacked clarity about the kinds of personal information they should withhold when working online. In other ways, pupils are sensitive to the needs of others. They say that bullying is rare. Staff deal with minor disputes quickly and efficiently to keep positive relationships and a harmonious atmosphere in the school.

### **Inspection findings**

- We evaluated the progress children make in the early years. Overall, children typically make good progress from their entry into the Reception Year. The new early years leader and her team identify and provide the right support so that children can catch up quickly.
- The achievement of disadvantaged children in the Reception Year has improved rapidly during the past year. Teachers use assessment information well, including assessments passed on by pre-school providers, to start checking what children already know, understand and can do. Consequently, activities and next steps are well matched to the children's needs.
- You have rightly identified that the achievement of girls in Reception is not consistently strong. There are some girls who do not make the same strong progress as other children to meet the national benchmarks in some areas of learning, for example in number and writing. However, current plans lack the precision needed to tackle this area well enough. As a result, the quality of teaching and provision for girls are not as good as they can be in getting them the best possible start to school.

- We also explored how well the pupil premium strategy is working to support pupils in receipt of the pupil premium funding, especially the most able. This is having a variable effect across the ability range of disadvantaged pupils.
- Disadvantaged pupils requiring additional targeted support are identified, including those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Careful monitoring and an appropriate match of work ensure that this group of pupils often make strong progress.
- However, leaders do not identify the most able disadvantaged pupils quickly enough. As a result, too few reach the higher standards (greater depth) of which they are capable in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school.
- The attendance of all pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. However, the attendance of those eligible for free school meals is below the national average.
- You, your staff and governors are rightly proud of the school's curriculum. You review this annually to take account of the evolving needs of the pupils. Strengths include building memorable activities to help pupils retain their knowledge and apply this to different contexts and situations.
- The curriculum is a key driver in the school's success. It provides a range of rich and divergent learning opportunities for pupils to practise and refine key skills to be successful learners. Foundation subjects, such as art, are prevalent and strongly represented around the school on display and in the pupils' work.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- re-evaluate the quality and impact of the pupil premium strategy to raise achievement further for disadvantaged pupils, particularly the most able
- raise teachers' expectations and the achievement of girls in the Reception Year.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Swindon. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Stewart Gale  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

We worked extensively through a range of inspection activities to evaluate the key lines of enquiry. This included observing and working with a few disadvantaged children in the Reception Year and Year 1. I checked the accuracy of teachers'

assessments and records by comparing these to what pupils know, understand and can do. I also talked with pupils during lessons and breaktime. I met with your early years leader to evaluate the use and accuracy of assessment. Additionally, I scrutinised safeguarding records and we discussed a wide range of related matters, including staff recruitment, training and vetting arrangements. I spoke with pupils and staff about their understanding of safeguarding procedures. I also reviewed evidence of various referrals and communications with external agencies for safeguarding pupils.

I met with school leaders and teachers. I also met with representatives of the governing body and reviewed school documents, including the school's self-evaluation summary and a sample of records of governors' visits. I analysed the school's self-evaluation, school improvement plan and records of moderation undertaken by the local authority. I took full account of the 23 responses to Parent View, as well as reviewing the free-text comments received during the inspection. To supplement this, I met directly with a few parents at the start of the inspection. Furthermore, I had a discussion with the school's appointed external adviser.